

**Mayor's Report for December 12, 2022, General Meeting
(Drafted for deadline Wednesday December 7, 2022)**

November was the second month of our new council year. As we settle into fall and winter there is still a lot keeping us busy.

1. Electrical Intertie to Bartlett Cove. Our best news of the month arrived December 6, 2022, as the National Park Service and AP&T finalized and signed the commercial agreement for operation of the power intertie between the Gustavus Hydropower system and Bartlett Cove. The intertie was completed in fall, 2021 and tested successfully but has been idle since then while the commercial arrangements were hammered out. The agreement was complicated by provisions for maintaining and keeping the NPS diesel generators available for NPS back up. This was new ground for both parties, so everyone was stepping out of their comfort zone and taking some risks. Nevertheless, they persevered and agreed to make it work. The agreement next goes to the Regulatory Commission of Alaska for its approval, but both the NPS and AP&T are expecting to start up the intertie within days while that approval is still pending.

The benefits to be realized with the startup of the intertie are huge. By replacing diesel generation at Bartlett Cove with clean hydropower from Falls Creek, the park will avoid emitting approximately 600 tons of carbon dioxide annually. Gustavus rate payers—residents, businesses, and agencies—will benefit from lower electric rates as the fixed costs of the hydro facility are spread across more power sales to the NPS. The savings is expected to appear on power bills as a Cost of Power Adjustment (COPA) credit of around \$0.10/kwh. The savings to Gustavus ratepayers may total over \$250,000 annually. Making fuller use of our hydropower resource to replace diesel generation is the biggest single step Gustavus can take toward mitigating climate change. Lower electric rates will also encourage more residents to electrify their transportation, building heating, and appliances.

Congratulations to AP&T and the NPS for this great success!

2. Steel Float Move to Winter Storage. Ben Sadler, Joe Vanderzanden, Elm Robichaud, and Brian Todd worked together on a very high tide to move the City's steel float from the dock on Icy Strait to its winter storage mooring in the Salmon River just downstream of the boat harbor. We thank Ben, Joe, Elm, and Brian for the hard work in icy conditions that made it possible to secure the float safely for the winter. Thanks also to Ben DeBoer for permission to moor the float on the edge of his property.

3. City Hall Front Door Installation and Entry Canopy. Over a year ago the City used Pandemic funding to buy new, code-compliant entry doors for the Fire Hall and City Hall. Then-Chief Miller installed the fire hall door but due to difficulties with framing the City Hall door installation was postponed. We are thankful to have contracted with Zach and Elijah Williams (Clinton Ventures), who successfully installed the new, out-swinging door at City Hall a few days ago. They also built a 12 ft long canopy to cover the boardwalk entry ramp to keep snow and ice from blocking

the out-swinging door. The entry canopy also has room for parking a couple bikes out of the weather. Thanks Zach and Elijah!

4. Electric Power to the Old Post Office Building. Thanks to John Nixon for providing and installing a temporary power service entry at the old post office building. With AP&T's already completed work to lay a new power line to the building it will be ready for Kenn Magowan to begin work this winter to renovate the structure for the new bike shop.

5. Electric Power to City Hall. We are working with AP&T and John Nixon to plan a new electric line from the service entry at the Firehall to City Hall. The existing line appears to have a fault that causes flickering power to City Hall. We expect to lay a new line in the spring.

6. Library Partnership with Gustavus School. Our librarians LeAnn Weikle and Jessie Soder met at the Gustavus Library with Chatham School District Superintendent Ralph Watkins to scope out a new partnership between the District and the Gustavus Public Library. Our library has facilities and programs that can compliment School educational programs to build new opportunities for Gustavus students. We are so lucky to have two experienced teachers as our librarians who are enthusiastic about helping young people here make the most of their school years. The Gustavus School is vital to the success of our community. Strengthening our partnership with the school is a vital investment in the future of our community. Our librarians have my full support in making the most of this opportunity.

6. AML Meeting. I'm pleased that Gustavus is well represented at the annual meetings of the Alaska Municipal League in Anchorage the week of Dec 5. Attendees include council members Brian Taylor and Shelley Owens, City Administrator Kathy Leary, City Clerk Karen Platt, and City Treasurer Ben Sadler. The annual meetings provide valuable training for council members and staff. Attendees also meet and network with state and municipal professionals, enhancing critical relationships. These opportunities are essential to building the skills that make us a more mature and effective municipality.

7. Playground Equipment for Salmon River Park. Kathy Leary met with the Alaska representative of Northwest Playground Equipment at the AML meetings in Anchorage. We plan a follow up zoom meeting next week to discuss ideas for improvements to our park play equipment that will be more suitable for older children. We will be sharing ideas with Ms. Karen McSpadden's class, which approached us asking for improved play equipment for the park. I'm hopeful we can realize the students' vision by next summer.

8. Infrastructure projects. Kathy continues to work with Solstice Consulting, our grant writing consultant, to identify and apply for grants to support our planned infrastructure improvement projects. We are also in discussions with the Alaska DOT&PF on projects to repair the Good River Bridge, build a wave barrier for the float system, and build a bike/pedestrian side path along Gustavus, Mountain View and Dock roads. We think we may do the bike path in phases and would prioritize the

distance from the school to Good River Corner first. We also are looking for grants for the DRC facilities projects.

9. Heat Pump Heating for City Hall. Dean Weikle and I submitted measurements and information for the heat pump system for City Hall to the folks at Mr. Cool who have offered to provide us a system as a demonstration of their product. They and we hope to encourage more Gustavus residents to install heat pumps to heat their homes and businesses with clean hydro power. We hope to install a system at City Hall by spring.

10. SEARHC Memorandum of Understanding. We hope to receive a response soon from the upper management of the SEARHC clinic to our drafted MOU between the clinic and the City.

Mike Taylor
Mayor